



On The Importance Of Paducah's The Wheelers

Nathan Brown
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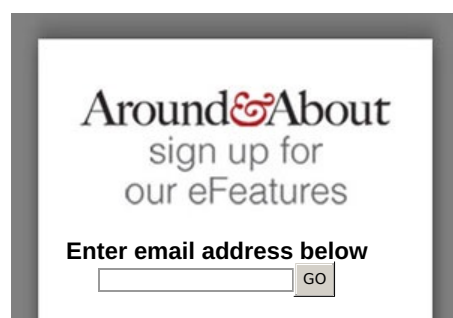
-Nathan Brown

The Wheelers is not just a band.. It's a Paducah institution. To put a finer point on it, band members Wheeler Underwood, Kenny Martin and Jay Grace have shaped the way almost every independent musician in Paducah have approached music, either directly or indirectly. Their passion for their art and their "Do-It-Yourself" work ethic has entertained and inspired countless western Kentucky musicians since the late 1970s.

At a very young age, my first live punk show was at the old Jaycee civic center on Lone Oak Road. The bands featured were Brain Dead, Signal 30 and MC2 (MC Squared). This show immediately had an impact on me, and illustrated perfectly that if anyone... even a kid like me... had something to say and a desire to perform, anything was possible. There was no need for parental permission, no dress code, and basically no rules. Yet somehow, in the haze of smoke, loud music and poor lighting, it was clear that everyone there was wrapped up in a joyous, peaceful celebration. There was a freedom in that place that I never knew existed. It was the freedom gained by doing things your own way and by building it all yourself.

Wheeler, Kenny and Jay have always been so kind and encouraging to me as a musician. As a young teenager, I looked up to those guys because they were creative, cool and always approachable. Now, as a middle aged man who has made a lifetime of memories playing music, I respect them even more

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because they have not changed. They continue to get together for their weekly jams or the occasional gig. Not for admiration. Not for critical acclaim. Certainly not for money. They are all about the joy music brings to life. Our friend (and Paducah music legend) Dave Phillips said it right... they are, and forever will be, the "Brothers In Jam".

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These guys have some serious mojo. They have been making their style of music for over 3 decades and it has never gone stale or out of style. In a world where music seems to change with the flavor of the month, The Wheelers have stayed true to themselves. I am honored to be playing bass in the band. I'll do my best to keep up!

As a kid who played his first "Hall Show" with Wheeler and Jay's "MC2" and Kenny's "Mrs. Frazier" in 1989, I can attest to one simple fact: The members of the Wheelers band helped me find my own voice in music. If I could be so bold as to imagine that anyone in Paducah has EVER been inspired or encouraged by any of my bands, it all goes back to Wheeler Underwood, Jay Grace and Kenny Martin. I think anyone who enjoys the thriving local music scene we all share in Paducah now should come by our show on June 11th. Not only as a sign of respect and gratitude for what they've helped build, but to simply here some amazing, original music by these Western Kentucky legends.

The Return of the Wheelers show will be at Paducah Beer Werks on Saturday, June 11th at 8 PM with openers Hi-Fi Ninja and Canes Bellum.



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